



City of Greensboro - Redistricting Fact Sheet

City's District History and Redistricting Terminology

History

- City moved from seven at-large Council positions to current structure of a mayor, three at-large, and five district Council members in 1987.
- Since the current Council structure was developed, the City has gone through the redistricting process six times.
- The City's most recent US Census report of raw population (262,704) was released March 3, 2011.

What is reapportionment?

- The process of deciding, after each Census, how many members a state will have in the US House of Representatives – so it does not affect the state and local level.

What is redistricting?

- A process by which voters are geographically grouped together to elect a representative to a governing board.
- Districts are assembled by following precinct boundaries.

What is gerrymandering?

- The drawing of district lines to unduly affect and influence political power.

When are district lines redrawn?

- At least once every ten years following the US Census.
- Redistricting can also occur after annexation to rebalance the population of each district.

Who draws the lines?

- District lines are drawn by the legislative body being redistricted.

Guiding Principles of Redistricting Process

- Population Balance: The Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment requires that every citizen's vote counts equally. Doing so requires that districts have roughly the same number of people. Exactly equal population among districts is not required. Courts allow for a 10 percent variance in size between districts.
- Constituent relationships: No incumbent Councilmember will be moved to a different district.
- Preserving District Cores: Moving large numbers of people between districts is to be avoided.
- Contiguous Geography: All precincts that make up a district will be contiguous, unless affected by annexation.
- Communities of Interest: District lines that split neighborhoods will be avoided
- Voting Rights Act: Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act prohibits practices that deny anyone the right to vote. Section 5 requires that Greensboro secure, from the Department of Justice, prior clearance before instituting changes in election practices. Their review will focus on insuring that minority voting strength has not been diminished.